

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MANAMA 00915 190704Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----073890 190705Z /11/63-

R 181030Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6068
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY SANA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAMA 0915
EXDIS
C O R R E C T E D C O P Y F O R E O L I N E

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (ATHERTON, ALFRED L., JR.) XF, BA
SUBJECT: ATHERTON VISIT TO MIDDLE EAST

REF: STATE 97555

I BRIEFED FOREIGN MINISTER ON BASIS REFTEL APRIL 17.
HE APPRECIATED ADVANCE INFORMATION AND WONDERED HOW ATHERTON
VISIT AND SECRETARY'S STOP IN EGYPT WOULD MESH. I REPLIED
THAT I HAD NO AUTHORITATIVE INFORMATION ABOUT SECRETARY'S
VISIT, BUT THAT IT WAS YET ANOTHER INDICATION OF OUR INTENT
TO PRESS AHEAD WITH SEARCH FOR COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT.
SECRETARY'S CONVERSATIONS WITH EGYPTIAN FONMIN WOULD HELP
CLARIFY FURTHER ISSUES WHICH ATHERTON WOULD BE PURSUING AT
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GREATER LENGTH DURING HIS TRIP.

2. FOREIGN MINISTER SPECULATED ABOUT CAMP DAVID MEETING OF
PRESIDENT AND CABINET AND EXPRESSED HOPE THAT MIDDLE EAST
WOULD BE ONE OF TOPICS AND THAT PRESIDENT AND HIS ADVISORS
WOULD CONCLUDE THAT USG MUST PRESS HARD AND EARLY FOR MIDDLE
EAST PEACE REGARDLESS OF DOMESTIC POLITICAL COSTS. FONMIN,

WHO IS CLOSE AND ACCURATE OBSERVER OF U.S. SCENE, SAID HE FELT PANAMA CANAL TREATY VOTE AND FATE OF MID EAST AIRCRAFT SALES PACKAGE WOULD BE GOOD INDICATORS OF PRESIDENT'S FUTURE ABILITY TO MOVE THE ISRAELIS TO ACCEPT PEACE ON REASONABLE BASIS.

3. FOREIGN MINISTER ASKED WHAT USG MIGHT DO IF PARTIES CANNOT AGREE ON DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES WHICH WOULD PERMIT NEGOTIATION TO GO FORWARD. WOULD USG CONSIDER PUTTING ITS OWN SET OF PRINCIPLES ON THE TABLE PUBLICLY AND ASKING ALL PARTIES TO SUBSCRIBE? I SAID THIS WAS KIND OF QUESTION IMPOSSIBLE TO ANSWER IN ADVANCE OF EVENTS BUT, PERSONALLY, I FELT SUCH A COURSE WOULD HAVE TO BE CONSIDERED MOST CAREFULLY FROM BOTH DIRECTIONS, NOT JUST AS A MEANS OF MOVING ISRAELIS AS FONMIN SEEMED TO ENVISAGE IT. IT WOULD HAVE TO ATTRACT SYRIANS AS WELL AND I WONDERED IF THEY WOULD SUBSCRIBE TO PRINCIPLES OF THE KIND FONMIN KNOWS EGYPT AND JORDAN MIGHT ACCEPT. HE SAID HE FELT THEY PROBABLY WOULD NOT UNLESS, PERHAPS, FULL WEIGHT OF SAUDIS AND OTHER MODERATE ARABS WAS APPLIED IN DAMASCUS AND ASAD COULD SEE THAT FULL WEIGHT OF USG AND EUROPEANS WAS BEING APPLIED IN ISRAEL.

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